



## Tennessee Regulatory Authority

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### **TRA holds hearing on telephone service standards**

The quality of services provided by the state's telecommunications providers was the subject of a rulemaking hearing held by the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA).

The hearing was for the purpose of establishing new service standards and general regulations for the companies that provide telephone service to the state's 3.6 million residential and business telephone customers.

"The regulations are specifically designed to ensure that Tennesseans continue to have access to quality telephone services in an emerging competitive telecommunications environment," explains Eddie Roberson, TRA Consumer Services Division Chief.

The hearing represented a commitment by the TRA to balance the state's policy of pro-competition in the telecommunications arena, with the public's expectations of quality service and privacy concerns.

The topics addressed included:

***Customer response times*** – Under the proposed rules, telephone companies would be required to provide quicker response times on calls to repair or service issues to its customers.

***Customer Refunds for Service Outages*** – If a customer's local service is interrupted due to no fault of the customer for more than 24-hours after being reported, a credit will be made to the customer's account.

***Disconnection of Local Telephone Service*** – The proposed rules would prohibit the disconnecting of a customer's local telephone service for non-payment of long-distance charges or other non-regulated services.

***Privacy of Customer Information*** – Telecommunications service providers would be prohibited from disclosing information about their customers, such as name, address, calling patterns, and other personal information.

***More stringent Service Standards*** – Local telephone companies would be required to repair 95% of out-of-service telephones within a 24-hour period.

TRA consideration of the proposed service standards will be made in the near term, but not before the state's telecommunications industry and the public has had an opportunity to comment.

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For more information about the TRA, visit our web site at [www.state.tn.us/tra](http://www.state.tn.us/tra).

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